

Burr Oak Woods

Conservation Nature Center Newsletter

The *Nutshell* ~ January 2010

Waterfowl in Missouri

This is a wonderful time of year to watch the skies and our waters for a variety of waterfowl passing through as they migrate. There are two groups that ducks are divided into based on the adaptations they use to obtain their food. These groups are dabblers and diver ducks.

Dabblers obtain their food by tipping their bodies so that their tail feathers point up and out of the water and their heads are under water. Instead of being horizontal with the water, they become vertical. These dabbling ducks are looking for insects and seeds in shallow water so they only need to stick their heads under water where they float or stand. Their legs are located in the middle of their body to give them excellent balance as they walk through shallow water. Dabbling wings are large in comparison to their body length,



which enables them to take off from the water like a helicopter. They can rise straight up to take off and come straight down to land without making a splash. As these ducks swim, you can identify them as a dabbling duck by the

way they float with their tail feathers out and above the water. Examples of this group of ducks are mallards, wood ducks, green-winged teal, and northern pintails.

Diving ducks will disappear completely beneath the surface of the water. They dive to the bottom of a lake or river to find fish, plant material, and snails. Their bodies have adapted so they are "aerodynamic" for diving. Their legs are further back on their bodies to allow them to dive deep into the water.

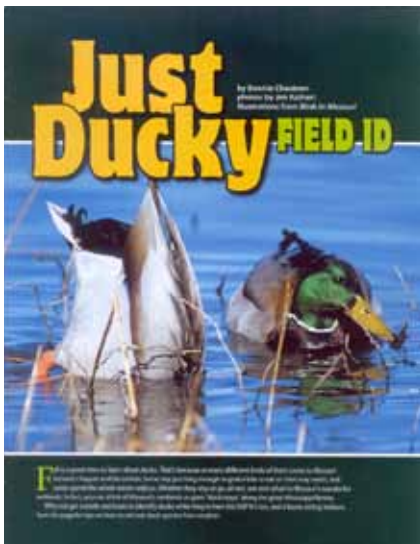
Their wings are shorter so that they remain streamlined during a dive. Because of this adaptation, they need room to land and take off, so the water becomes a landing strip. They will splash more as they seemingly run to gain speed to take off and as they glide in they



do so as if airplanes would with its landing gear down. Specific diving ducks to look for are canvasbacks, common mergansers, and ring-necked ducks.

Using these criteria to identify ducks we invite you to head out to watch these incredible waterfowl as they visit Missouri waterways while passing through. There are many places to view these crafty dabblers and divers near the Kansas City area, such as Lake Jacomo and Smithville Lake. If you would like a unique and breathtaking experience head north to Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge which is a large wetland that bring in trumpeter swans, snow geese, and even bald eagles.

Christie Burkert, Naturalist

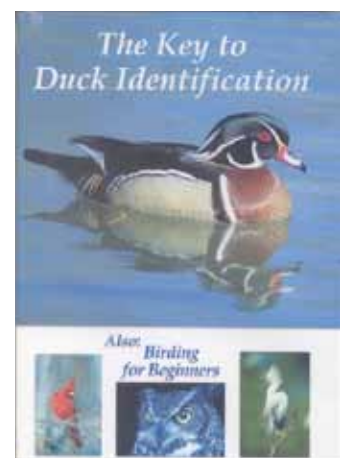


Just Ducky Field ID Leaflet

Fall is a great time to learn about ducks. That's because so many different kinds of them come to Missouri between August and December. This free leaflet helps you learn to identify them, explains how they float and gives information on the best places for viewing enjoyment - FREE at the nature center.

The Key to Duck Identification DVD with bonus feature, *Birding for Beginners*

Birding is a great way to enjoy the outdoors. The more you learn, the more you see. This DVD/video package shows you how to identify birds in general and ducks in particular. Learn the differences between the two main groups of ducks-divers and dabblers - and discover how to identify birds by size, shape, color, behavior, and song. - Available for purchase at the nature shop for \$10.00.





Hello everyone!

Please allow me to introduce myself. Actually, many of you already know me. I have been around for a while, as the Assistant Nature Center Manager. In November, I was offered the exciting challenge and opportunity to become the Nature Center Manager. Working at Burr Oak Woods has always been a dream job for me in that I am allowed the chance to share my love of nature and passion for the environment with others. It has been a wonderful experience working with an incredibly talented and hardworking staff and group of volunteers. I am anxious to get started on this new segment of my career.

As you are aware, your Missouri Department of Conservation is also funded by a 1/8 of 1% sales tax. The Missouri Department of Conservation has taken a close look at how we should respond to the decrease in funding during these tough economic times, and how we can spend your tax dollars most wisely. We are in for some challenges in the months ahead.

It has been determined that there will be a reduction in staff and hours of operation at all MDC Nature Centers. Please make note of the proposed changes at Burr Oak Woods, as they may affect your visits to the area. The final plan will be implemented on March 1st. See upcoming Nutshell Newsletters for further updates.

Proposed Conservation Area hours:

Central Standard Time: 7:00a – 6:00p

Daylight Savings Time: 7:00a – 8:00p

The front gate will be reprogrammed to these hours. Bathrooms will be closed when the building is closed. Outdoor privies will remain open.

Proposed Nature Center hours:

Open to the public Tuesday through Friday

7:00a – 6:00p

Open to the public Saturday

8:00a – 5:00p

The Nature Center will be closed on Sundays and Mondays.

We are absolutely committed to continue to provide you with quality programs and services, despite the reduction of staff. I hope that you will find our new extended hours convenient for your visit to Burr Oak Woods!

See you on the trails!

Lisa LaCombe

Nature Center Manager

Volunteer Class 2010

We are excited to begin a new volunteer training class in February! Each year, we train a fresh group of people who are interested in becoming a volunteer for the Missouri Department of Conservation. Each of these individuals brings brand new talents to the nature center! If you are interested in sharing your love for nature with others, we need you! Volunteer Naturalists help the nature center staff in so many ways, including: assisting with educational programs, special events, clerical support, animal care, trail maintenance and land management projects. There is one thing that all of our volunteer naturalists have in common, a lifetime love of learning, and a big heart, willing to share!

In 2008, we trained our first youth volunteers. What an amazing group of young people! The purpose of this program is to allow youth ages 14 and up who are considering pursuing a career in the natural resources field an opportunity to test the waters and to network with people who may help guide them in their quest. They will have an opportunity to be involved in all aspects of the nature center and to learn from staff in other

divisions. It has been extremely rewarding for us to work with these children, the future generation of the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Our volunteer group, both young and young at heart, is a big family. We work hard together, we learn from each other, we share our passion about the environment and we have fun!

We are currently accepting applications for the 2010 Volunteer Training Class. Please join us! To apply for this 32 hour training, please stop by or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (816) 228-3766 between now and January 15th.



Rebecca Anderson, naturalist



I grew up on a farm in Illinois and have enjoyed the outdoors for as long as I can remember. I love backpacking, canoeing, bicycling, reading, and spending time with family and friends. Before coming to Burr Oak Woods, I was a

Naturalist for the Conservation Department in St. Joseph. I look forward to sharing the outdoors with all of you here! Join us in welcoming Rebecca to the staff at Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center.

Volunteer Milestones



*Volunteers
that reached
milestones in the
months of August,
September, and
October*

*Jennifer Chapin ~ 500 hrs
Ruth Farrand-Cox ~ 1500 hrs.
Tanya Jones ~ 300 hrs.
Dianne Kixmiller ~ 2000 hrs.
Dianna Lentz ~ 400 hrs.
Gail McKay ~ 300 hrs.
Richard Norris ~ 1000 hrs.
Judy Oetting ~ 2500 hrs.
Tom Reck ~ 300 hrs.*

January Programs

Please call 816-228-3766 on or after Saturday, January 2, 2010 to register for the free programs listed. It is important to arrive five minutes before the program time. If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible, so someone on the waiting list may attend.

2 Saturday 10:00 – 11:00a

State of Excitement!

Families with children 6 & up

Bedazzle us with your brilliant mind as you answer nature challenge questions about the wonderful state of Missouri! No registration is required.



3 Sunday 1:30 – 2:30p

Cold-blooded Critters

All ages

Join us for an indoor presentation on some of the creepy, crawly, cold-blooded creatures of Missouri. Learn the differences between venomous and non-venomous snakes and play fact or fiction to find out the truth about this often-misunderstood group of critters. No registration is required.

9 Saturday 1:00 – 2:00p

Animal Acrobats

Families with children 5 & up

Do you like to do handstands? Play on the jungle gym? If so, you will love finding out about some of our most acrobatic winter wildlife. Many of our local birds and other wildlife do all kinds of acrobatics to get some tasty food in their hungry winter bellies. Come join us to learn more about these neat creatures and get a front row seat to watch the show! Please call to register.

10 Sunday 1:00 – 2:30p

Nature Underground

Families with children 8 & up

Although the winter wind blows cold, many of our smallest Missouri creatures are safely hiding away underground until spring. Bring your family to discover who is under our feet as we take a hike in the winter woods. Please call to register.



12 Tuesday 10:00 – 11:00a

Babes in the Woods: Snow Hike

Ages 0 – 36 months

The quietness of a snowy morning cannot be duplicated by anything. Join us for a brisk walk on one of our stroller friendly trails. Please let it snow, then we can look for tracks and experience the magic of a snow-covered forest. Please call to register.

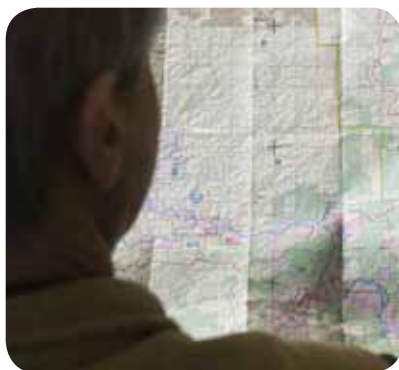
12 Tuesday 6:30 – 8:00p

Conservation Kid's

Club: Finding Our Way

Ages 7 – 13

Have you ever been lost? Join us for some great fun as we learn how to read topographical maps and use a compass to keep us on track! Please call to register.



13 Wednesday 10:00 – 11:00a or 1:00 – 2:00p

Little Acorns: Squirrel Smarts

Ages 3 – 5



Are you smarter than a squirrel? These fuzzy tailed mammals are smart and sometimes sneaky. We will learn about these acrobatic critters and find out just how smart they really are. Please call to register.

13 Wednesday 10:00 – 11:30a

Home School: Mammal Mysteries

Ages 6 – 8; 9 – 11; 12 – 18

Furry creatures roam the night leaving clues behind. Learn the basics of tracking mammals as we go off-trail to unravel nature's mysteries and make plaster copies of tracks. Play games to learn the similarities and differences of the eight mammal orders in Missouri. Please call to register.



15 Friday 8:30 – 10:00a

Bird Watchers

Adults & youngsters 8 & up

Let's go outside and get some fresh air while looking for local bird residents. Master Naturalist Sara Scheil will lead this group on a favorite trail. If it is colder than 20 degrees, we will stay inside and view birds at the feeders. Please call to register; youngsters 8 – 15 must be accompanied by an adult.

16 Saturday 1:00 – 2:00p

Winter Games

Families with children 6 & up



No, we are not talking about the Olympics. Join a naturalist on a special winter scavenger hunt. It may be cold but there are still wonderful and interesting things to see outside! Please call to register.

17 Sunday 2:00 – 3:00p

Turkey Talk

Families with children 8 & up

We will learn about these big birds and how they survive the cold winter months. Then we'll check on our resident wild turkeys to see what they have been up to. Please call to register.

23 Saturday Noon - 1:00p

Early Missouri

All Ages

Discover just how early settlers made use of the natural resources in Missouri to survive the harsh winters. How is their lifestyle different than ours today? Are the animals that the pioneers utilized for their family's dinner table the same wildlife that live here today? Come on out and discover the answers to these questions and more with pioneer, Jason Watson! Please call to register.

24 Sunday 2:30 – 3:30p

The Forest of S. T. Shrew

Families with children 5 & up

Join us for an exciting story about Jackie, a little girl who magically transforms into a shrew. Discover how her small size enables her to explore the many micro habitats that exist right beneath the forest floor. Along with the story, each family will create a craft project to take home. Please call to register.



30 Saturday 10:00 – 11:00a

That's Just Daffy!

Families with children 3 & up

Waterfowl may not "quack" you up, but they're amazingly varied in color, size, and shape and often quite amusing creatures to watch. Learn about some wonderful little Missouri ducks, some of their more entertaining behavior, and make a cute duck to take home. Please call to register.

30 Saturday 11:00 – Noon

Rockin' & Readin' Nature Tales

Ages 2 & up

Join us for a story hour as we lead you on fantastic nature adventures! We will meet butterflies, birds, mammals, and all sorts of magnificent creatures! We will cross rivers, discover mysteries within the forest, and fly across the prairies. Our imaginations are the only limits. No registration is required, walk-ins are welcome.



31 Sunday 1:30 – 2:30p

Shhhh,

They're Sleeping!

Families

with children 5 & up

Bears aren't the only animals in Missouri that sleep for much of the winter. Some animals don't even breathe through their nose, have a beating heart, or eat or drink for 5 months of the year! If you're intrigued, please join us for some amazing tales of very sleepy creatures. Please call to register.



MDC
DISCOVER
nature

MDC
DISCOVER
nature
FAMILIES

Discover Nature
Families programs are designed to help adults and children explore nature and master outdoor skills together.

9 Saturday 8:15 – Noon

Eagle Days at Smithville Lake
Families with children 8 & up

Majestic birds of prey await you for this exciting family adventure. Whether you are a birding enthusiast or budding duck hunter, you can learn how to help your kids identify migrant waterfowl and other local wildlife as we scout the lake for eagles before the live eagle show at 11:00a.

Please call to register.

(Meet at BOW at 8:15a or the Little Platte Park Course Golf Complex of Smithville Lake at 9:15a)



Join us as we feed the critters on exhibit at Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 3p. Each Sunday a nature film will be shown at 3:30p.

**Burr Oak Woods Conservaton Nature Center
James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area
Youth Managed Turkey Hunts**

Date of Hunts:

Required pre-hunt Orientation Saturday, April 3 at Lake Co. Shooting Range and hunt location
Hunt Saturday, April 17th and Sunday, April 18th

Who may apply:

Youngsters age 11 to 15 who live in Jackson County

•Any youth hunter permanently confined to a wheelchair will be automatically allowed to participate in the managed hunt. A completed application accompanied by a supporting statement from a licensed physician is required. Applications must be submitted between January 2 and February 15, 2010.

Application Deadline:

Applications must be premarked or hand delivered to Burr Oak Woods Nature Center between January 2 and February 15, 2010. A parent or guardian's signature is required on submitted applications.

Successful youth hunt applicants will be notified by March 5, 2010. All youth hunters will be with an adult hunting guide (a parent or guardian is encouraged to accompany their child, but it is not required). Each hunter will be eligible to harvest one male turkey.

STOP BY OR CONTACT ONE OF THE MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION LOCATIONS LISTED BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION AND APPLICATION OR DOWNLOAD AN APPLICATION ONLINE AT www.burroakwoods.org

**BURR OAK WOODS
CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER**
1401 NW Park Road
Blue Springs, Mo 64015
816-228-3766

**JAMES A REED
MEMORIAL WILDLIFE AREA**
13101 Ranson Road
Lee's Summit, Mo 64082
816-622-0900

LAKE CITY SHOOTING RANGE
28900 E Argo Road
Grain Valley, Mo 64029
816-229-4448

**ANITA B. GORMAN
CONSERVATION DISCOVERY CENTER**
4750 Troost Avenue
Kansas City, Mo 64110
816-759-7300

KANSAS CITY REGIONAL OFFICE
3424 NW Duncan Road
Blue Springs, Mo 64015
816-655-6250



Lake City Shooting Range
 28900 E Argo Road, Grain Valley, Mo 64029
816-229-4448
www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/lakecity/



Normal Hours of Operation November 14, 2009 - April 30, 2010
Wednesday - Sunday Noon - 4:30p

The New Lake City Shooting Range

The new Lake City Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center is quickly coming to a completion. Eighteen months ago the construction of the new range began. When completed will have much more to offer the Kansas City shooting public than ever before. There will be 20 booths on the rifle range, a separate pistol range with 10 booths; two trap/skeet overlay fields; a separate trap field, and 10 static archery targets. The rifle and pistol range are fully baffled, concrete floor and walls, with state of the art bullet traps at the far end of the range. The bullet traps will make it much more economical to collect the lead projectiles for recycling and reducing the negative effect on the environment.

The Outdoor Education Center will have a classroom that can easily hold 70+ students for Hunter Education classes, Bowhunting classes and many other programs. The classroom will be equipped with the state of the art audio and video equipment to enhance educational presentations. The Outdoor Education Center and range areas will be fully disability accessible. The new Lake City Range is scheduled to open shortly after the New Year. Hope to see you there. Happy New Year!

Steve Elliott, Outdoor Education Center Supervisor



The new pistol range with concrete floor, walls, overhead baffles, and bullet trap at the end of the range.



The new 20 booth rifle range is still under construction however, it is quickly coming together.



Burr Oak Woods CNC

The Nutshell Newsletter

Missouri Department of Conservation

1401 NW Park Road - Blue Springs, Mo 64015

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Annual Nature Photography Competition

All photographs must be taken at Burr Oak Woods Conservation Area

How to enter

- Entries must be submitted no later than 5:00p Saturday, January 16, 2010
- Each entry must include a completed entry form
- Subject matter can include landscapes, wildlife, people and events at Burr Oak Woods CA
- Completed entries may be mailed or hand delivered to : Burr Oak Woods CNC, 1401 NW Park Road, Blue Springs, Mo 64015

Rules and Regulations

- Photography competition is open to any Missouri resident
- Limit of three entries per person
- Entries are judged on artistic merit (by the general public visiting Burr Oak Woods CNC)
- Photographs must be the original work of the photographer
- Photo must be 8x10
- Photo must be matted and unframed
- Name must not appear on the photo or mat

Voting

- The general public will vote on photos during normal business hours
- Photos will be placed on display January 18, 2010
- Voting will be open January 18 - 31, 2010

Awards

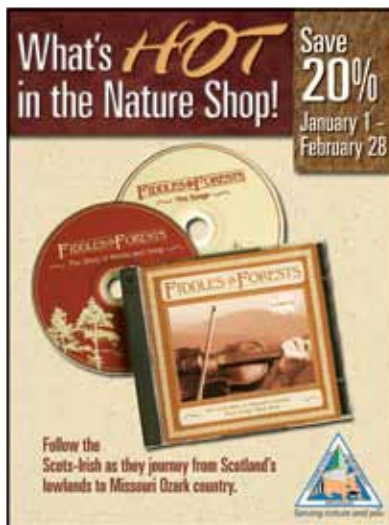
- Winners will be announced Monday, February 1, 2010
- First, second, and third place ribbons will be awarded
- All photographs will be on display through out the month of February

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Nature Shop News

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

Featured Item - receive 20% off at the time of purchase. The heritage card discount will not apply to this item.



FIDDLES AND FORESTS CD

Former Conservation Department educator and fiddle player, Mike Fraser, brings Missouri's Scots-Irish folk history to life with this spirited mix of Celtic jigs, foot-stomping Ozark bluegrass and narrative enhanced by nature sounds. Follow the Scots-Irish as they journey from Scotland's lowlands to the shores of America, and on to Missouri Ozark country. With more than 20 songs, the CD's highlights include folk minstrels Cathy Barton and Dave Para. The two-disc set features the story of songs on one disc and the music alone on the other.